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SEP 11 2009

In re Application of	:	OFFICE OF PETITIONS
Kim, et al.	:	
Application No. 10/713,943	:	DECISION
Filed/Deposited: 14 November, 2003	:	
Attorney Docket No. 2013P125	:	

This is a decision on the petition filed on 23 July, 2009, considered as a petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 (no fee) requesting withdrawal of the holding of abandonment in the above-identified application.

The petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 is **GRANTED**.

As to the Request to Withdraw  
the Holding of Abandonment

Petitioners always are directed to the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I) for guidance as to the proper showing and timeliness requirements for relief under 37 C.F.R. §1.181.

BACKGROUND

The record reflects as follows:

Petitioner failed to reply timely and properly to the Notice of Allowance and Fees Due mailed on 3 December, 2008, with reply due under a non-extendable deadline on or before 3 March, 2009.

The application went abandoned by operation of law after midnight 3 March, 2009.

The Office mailed the Notice of Abandonment on 31 March, 2009.

On 7 May, 2009, Petitioner filed, *inter alia*, a petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.181 and an averment of non-receipt, but failed to comply with the requirements expressly set forth in the

guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I) requiring: a copy of the firm due-date docket/calendar and a copy of the docket sheet (or file jacket cover) for the instant application and; recitations as to a statement of non-receipt “at the correspondence address of record,” a statement of search of the file and non-discovery, a description of the docketing system, a statement of system reliability, and such requirements as set forth in the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP 711.03(c)(I). Because Petitioner did not provide a copy of the docket sheet for the instant application and make express the statement set forth in the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP 711.03(c)(I), as set forth below, the petition was dismissed on 26 May, 2009.

On 12 June, 2009, Petitioner re-advanced his petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.181, however, rather than address the specific and explicit and express statements to which Petitioner was directed (the requirements as set forth in the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP 711.03(c)(I), Petitioner chose instead to lecture the Office. The petition was dismissed on 22 June, 2009.

On 23 July, 2009, Petitioner sought reconsideration of his petition and presented copies of the docket sheet for the application and the due date calendar for the firm, and further made statements of, *inter alia*, non-receipt at the correspondence address of record, search and non-discovery, description of the docketing system and as to its sufficient reliability—all consistent with satisfying the showing required as set forth in the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I).

The guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I) provides in pertinent part:

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The showing required to establish nonreceipt of an Office communication must include a statement from the practitioner describing the system used for recording an Office action received at the correspondence address of record with the USPTO. The statement should establish that the docketing system is sufficiently reliable. It is expected that the record would include, but not be limited to, the application number, attorney docket number, the mail date of the Office action and the due date for the response.

Practitioner must state that the Office action was not received at the correspondence address of record, and that a search of the practitioner's record(s), including any file jacket or the equivalent, and the application contents, indicates that the Office action was not received. A copy of the record(s) used by the practitioner where the non-received Office action would have been entered had it been received is required.

A copy of the practitioner's record(s) required to show non-receipt of the Office action should include the master docket for the firm. That is, if a three month period for reply was set in the nonreceived Office action, a copy of the master docket report showing all replies docketed for a date three months from the mail date of the nonreceived Office action must be submitted as documentary proof of nonreceipt of the Office action. If no such master docket exists, the practitioner should so state and provide other evidence

such as, but not limited to, the following: the application file jacket; incoming mail log; calendar; reminder system; or the individual docket record for the application in question.<sup>1</sup> (Emphasis supplied.)

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Out of an abundance of caution, Petitioners always are reminded that the filing of a petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 does not toll any periods that may be running any action by the Office and a petition seeking relief under the regulation must be filed within two (2) months of the act complained of (*see*: 37 C.F.R. §1.181(f)), and those registered to practice and all others who make representations before the Office are reminded to inquire into the underlying facts of representations made to the Office and support averments with the appropriate documentation—since all owe to the Office the continuing duty to disclose.<sup>2</sup>

The availability of applications and application papers online to applicants/practitioners who diligently associate their Customer Number with the respective application(s) now provides an applicant/practitioner on-demand information as to events/transactions in an application.

### STATUTES, REGULATIONS

Congress has authorized the Commissioner to "revive an application if the delay is shown to the satisfaction of the Commissioner to have been "unavoidable." 35 U.S.C. §133 (1994). And the regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.137(a) and (b) set forth the requirements for a Petitioner to revive a previously unavoidably or unintentionally, respectively, abandoned application.<sup>3,4</sup>

Moreover, the Office has set forth in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I) the showing and timeliness requirements for a proper showing for relief under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 in these matters.

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<sup>1</sup> *See*: MPEP §711.03(c)(I)(A).

<sup>2</sup> *See* supplement of 17 June, 1999. The Patent and Trademark Office is relying on Petitioner's duty of candor and good faith and accepting a statement made by Petitioner. *See* Changes to Patent Practice and Procedure, 62 Fed. Reg. at 53160 and 53178, 1203 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office at 88 and 103 (responses to comments 64 and 109)(applicant obligated under 37 C.F.R. §10.18 to inquire into the underlying facts and circumstances when providing statements to the Patent and Trademark Office).

<sup>3</sup> *See*: Changes to Patent Practice and Procedure; Final Rule Notice, 62 Fed. Reg. at 53158-59 (October 10, 1997), 1203 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office at 86-87 (October 21, 1997).

<sup>4</sup> The language of 35 U.S.C. §133 and 37 C.F.R. §1.137(a) is clear, unambiguous, and without qualification: the delay in tendering the reply to the outstanding Office action, as well as filing the first petition seeking revival, must have been unavoidable for the reply now to be accepted on petition. (Therefore, by example, an unavoidable delay in the payment of the Filing Fee might occur if a reply is shipped by the US Postal Service, but due to catastrophic accident, the delivery is not made.) Delays in responding properly raise the question whether delays are unavoidable. Where there is a question whether the delay was unavoidable, Petitioners must meet the burden of establishing that the delay was unavoidable within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §133 and 37 C.F.R. §1.137(a). And the Petitioner must be diligent in attending to the matter. Failure to do so does not constitute the care required under Pratt, and so cannot satisfy the test for diligence and due care. (By contrast, unintentional delays are those that do not satisfy the very strict statutory and regulatory requirements of unavoidable delay, and also, by definition, are not intentional.))

Decisions on reviving abandoned applications on the basis of “unavoidable” delay have adopted the reasonably prudent person standard in determining if the delay was unavoidable:

The word ‘unavoidable’ . . . is applicable to ordinary human affairs, and requires no more or greater care or diligence than is generally used and observed by prudent and careful men in relation to their most important business. It permits them in the exercise of this care to rely upon the ordinary and trustworthy agencies of mail and telegraph, worthy and reliable employees, and such other means and instrumentalities as are usually employed in such important business. If unexpectedly, or through the unforeseen fault or imperfection of these agencies and instrumentalities, there occurs a failure, it may properly be said to be unavoidable, all other conditions of promptness in its rectification being present.<sup>5</sup>

Allegations as to the Request to  
Withdraw the Holding of Abandonment

The guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(I) specifies the showing required and how it is to be made and supported.

Petitioner appears to have made the showing required.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, the petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.181 is **granted**, and the 31 March, 2009, Notice of Abandonment is **vacated**.

The instant application is released to the Technology Center/AU 2188 for further processing in due course.

Petitioner may find it beneficial to view Private PAIR within a fortnight of the instant decision to ensure that the revival has been acknowledged by the TC/AU in response to this decision. It is noted that all inquiries with regard to that change in status need be directed to the TC/AU where that change of status must be effected—that does not occur in the Office of Petitions.

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<sup>5</sup> In re Mattullath, 38 App. D.C. 497, 514-15 (1912)(quoting Ex parte Pratt, 1887 Dec. Comm’r Pat. 31, 32-33 (1887)); see also Winkler v. Ladd, 221 F. Supp. 550, 552, 138 USPQ 666, 167-68 (D.D.C. 1963), aff’d, 143 USPQ 172 (D.C. Cir. 1963); Ex parte Henrich, 1913 Dec. Comm’r Pat. 139, 141 (1913). In addition, decisions on revival are made on a “case-by-case basis, taking all the facts and circumstances into account.” Smith v. Mossinghoff, 671 F.2d 533, 538, 213 USPQ 977, 982 (D.C. Cir. 1982). Finally, a petition cannot be granted where a petitioner has failed to meet his or her burden of establishing that the delay was “unavoidable.” Haines v. Quigg, 673 F. Supp. 314, 316-17, 5 USPQ2d 1130, 1131-32 (N.D. Ind. 1987).

Telephone inquiries regarding this decision may be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3214—it is noted, however, that all practice before the Office is in writing (see: 37 C.F.R. §1.2<sup>6</sup>) and the proper authority for action on any matter in this regard are the statutes (35 U.S.C.), regulations (37 C.F.R.) and the commentary on policy (MPEP). Therefore, no telephone discussion may be controlling or considered authority for Petitioner's action(s).



/John J. Gillon, Jr./  
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Senior Attorney  
Office of Petitions

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<sup>6</sup> The regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.2 provide:

**§1.2 Business to be transacted in writing.**

All business with the Patent and Trademark Office should be transacted in writing. The personal attendance of applicants or their attorneys or agents at the Patent and Trademark Office is unnecessary. The action of the Patent and Trademark Office will be based exclusively on the written record in the Office. No attention will be paid to any alleged oral promise, stipulation, or understanding in relation to which there is disagreement or doubt.